

A
SERMON

Preached before the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

Lord Mayor,

AND

Court of ALDERMEN,

AT THE

GUILD-HALL CHAPPEL,

Jan. 20. 1683.

By *John Standish*, D.D. Rector of *Therfield*,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to HIS
MAJESTY.

Published at the Desire of the LORD MAYOR
and Court of ALDERMEN.

L O N D O N,

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SERMON

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LORDS

OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL

AND

THE COMMONS

IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

THE 14th OF FEBRUARY 1688

BY JOHN HUGHES

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE

TO THE
Right Honourable
Sir, HENRY TULSE,
Lord Mayor,

And to the
Court of ALDERMEN.

My Lord,

I *T was somewhat late before I received
your Commands, (for such I ever ac-
count the Desires of my Lawful Su-
perieurs) which is one reason that this
short Discourse hath been so long in com-
ing to your Hands.*

And

And I shall not trouble your Lordship with any other Apology, because it was not framed for, ~~nor fixed to any Solemn Time, or Special Occasion,~~ but with an equal respect to every Day in the Year, or rather to all the Days of our Lives.

Indeed, the Subject thereof is Common, but ~~not therefore~~ to be despised, more then any other Common Good: more then our Common Prayers, Common Salvation, or our Common Faith, which the Apostle elsewhere calls our Precious Faith, (or Honourable, as the Greek imports.) And the more Common things of Publick use and consequence are, they should be so much the more Precious in our Eyes.

'Tis true the Scene is laid in LONDON, yet not so confined thither, but it may reach the remotest parts of the Nation; for this little Mapp presents you with a Transient view of the present State, and Morals of all E-N-G-L-A-N-D.

England! another Canaan, for Beauty, Wealth, Prosperity, Peace, and Plenty all good things that a Loyal Heart can wish, and yet, (I wish I could not truly say) another Canaan too, for Ingratitude, and forgetting G O D their Saviour. The happiest Nation

on under Heaven at this hour, and only miserable in this, that we do not know how happy we are. For we may fairly challenge all Europe for a more Gracious KING, a more Glorious CHURCH, a more Peaceable STATE, a more Gentle and Easie GOVERNMENT, more Just and Wholesome LAWS, and yet we cannot, nay, we will not see it. We are unthankful still, and still murmuring, and know not what we would have, unless we could be Angels before the time.

This provoking ill Humour hath of late spread it self throughout the Kingdom; and therefore my Arguments against it are so General, and take in all sorts and degrees of Men, all that would be thought good Christians, or good Subjects; the very Dissenters themselves are not a little concerned therein, if they please to read them without that false Glass of guilty Prejudice.

However they deal with us for doing our Duty, and speaking the Truth in Love, so long as we have Patronage and Protection from your Lordships Chair, and that Honourable Bench, we shall never think our Labour lost, or unrewarded.

The

The time hath been, when Men in Your
Lordships High Place, would not endure
sound Doctrine, having itching Ears.
Thanks be to GOD and his Vicegerent, that
time is now past, and the Case so well altered,
that sound Doctrine, and sincere
Loyalty will as easily go down, and pass
muster in the City, as at Court.

With my hearty Prayers for the long continuance of G O D S Blessing upon Your Lordship, your Loyal Brethren, and the whole Government of this City, I am

My Lord,

Your Lordships most

Obedient Servant,

John Standish.

Deut. VI. part of the 11, and 12 verses.

—When thou shalt have Eaten, and be Full,
then beware lest thou forget the LORD.—

Prosperity and Adversity are the great Theatres of Humane life; the two famous Tests to prove what *Spirit* and temper Men are of, for it is an Error of the *Vulgar* only, that all is well, when their Gold and Silver, Flocks and Herds, Corn and Wine *increase* and grow upon them; *Wiser* Men find it as hard a task, (at least) to command and manage a head-strong, flowing fortune, as to keep themselves from sinking, and being desperate, when they are reduced to their lowest Ebb, last Shifts, and Wits end. It is an old Question amongst the learned Moralists, which of the two Estates is most entangled with dangers and difficulties? the great cry is out upon *Prosperity*, who by her killing Smiles, treacherous Enchantments, and stealing Flatteries, Effeminates, and Robbs the Spirit of its due force and vigour; She basely betrays the Fort by letting the Enemy in at a Postern, and easily conquers those daring Heroes who never turned their backs of visible danger: Whom no *Adverse* affair, not *Death* it self, in all its frightful change of shapes, could ever daunt, or dash out of Countenance.

And indeed 'tis a *Truth* which the Oracles of GOD have vouched to us by no mean Instances to put it beyond all dispute, For whilst *Gideon* was a private
B man,

man, *the least in his Fathers house, and threshed Wheat by the Wine-press*, he was a very Good man, and a great Favourite in the Court of Heaven; the Text says, that the *Angel of the LORD visited and communed freely with him*, as a Man does with his Friend; but then, when once He grew Great, and was fleshed with a miraculous victory over the *mighty Kings of Midian*, the same man was not the same; for he abused his prosperous fortune, and made him an *Epheod of the Ear-rings taken in spoil*, and put it in His City *Ophrah*, and all Israel went a whoring after it, which thing became a snare to Gideon and his house. Thus one bewitching *Dalilah* subdued the invincible *Samson*, when all other Arts and Arms of *Palestine* could neither withstand, no, nor find out his strength. Before I was troubled I went wrong, saith King David: And — *It is good for me that I was afflicted*; that set him right. But then again when He sat still at *Jerusalem* in a profound Peace, and had nothing else to do, He fell into those two grievous Sins which cut him out work for *Repentance* all the days of his Life. His son *Solomon*, the wisest Prince that ever swayed That, or any other Scepter under the Sun, yet stands charged with very great folly towards the end of his peaceable Reign; for living in all ease and pleasure, and having no manner of *Enemies*, but those most deadly ones of his own house, his False Friends, he unadvisedly suffer'd them in his Old declining Age to tempt him to *Idolatry*. To add no more, *Israel* in general who found the land of *Egypt*, that house of *Bondage* and hardship, a wholesome School of *Vertue*, made the blessed Land of *Canaan* a Nourse of all *Vices*, a mere Land of forgetfulness; which *Moses* the Man of GOD here having a clear prospect of, he lays in early caution against it in these words, — *When thou shalt*

Thou shalt have eaten, and be full, then beware lest thou forget the LORD.

For our due handling of these words I shall endeavour,

1. To state the genuine sense and full importance of the caution.

2. To back and enforce it with some proper Considerations.

3. And Lastly, To tender some short directive Rules how we may best reduce it to Practice.

I begin with the First; And

1. To forget the LORD, imports in general, to condemn the power of Religion, and with that old Fool, to say in ones heart, there is no GOD, no Judge, or Judgment to come; at least to deny Him that Honour and Worship due to His Holy and Reverend Name, and give it to Another; to put ones trust and confidence in Creatures or Idols, the works of God's, or of Mens hands, more then the Creator, and cast his Commandments behind ones back, as if he owed no duty either to God or Man: It implies a stupid habitual neglect of Gods Service, which is the great business, and chief end of our Creation; when a Man immerseth himself so deep in the fruitless cares, the frothy Vanities of this World, and the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, that GOD is not in all his serious thoughts, that is, not in one of them All; but he lives and dies an Atheist, Epicure, Idolater, or ungodly Infidel, and so plungeth himself, headlong into that dreadful Doom in the Psalm, *The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget GOD.*

2. To forget the LORD signifies here more especially, not to recount and value, not to be duly sensible of, and truly thankful for his past or present Mercies, and Deliverances; not to lay them to heart, and call them to mind: not to suffer them to have their

proper effect upon us, when his *own* beloved and of late distressed *People* forget GOD their SAVIOUR, who brought them out of *Ægypt* with a high *Hand*, and stretched out Arm; who *led them through the Wilderness*, and fought all their *battels* for them, drowning some of their Enemies in the depth of the *Sea*, and routing all others at *Land*, and planted them in a good Land, in another *Paradise*; even the *Land of Promise*; a Land of *Corn, Wine, and Oyl*, a Land *flowing with Rivers of Milk and Brooks of Honey*. For them to Rebel and lift up their heel against Him merely out of *wantonness*, and too much *Peace and Plenty*, were beyond all *Parallel*, if not all *Pardon* also; for, as the Royal Prophet observes, *the merciful and gracious LORD, hath so done his marvellous works, that they ought to be had in Remembrance*. And therefore,

3. And Lastly, To discover the full strength and force of the *Caution*, we must fly to that usual figure in *Rhetorick*, whereby much more is *implied* than is *expressed*, like that of the Prophet, *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, and not have compassion on the Son of her Womb?* It is impossible in Nature: That of St. Paul, *I am not ashamed of*, that is, *I glory in the Gospel and Cross of CHRIST*, albeit the wise Greeks account it *Foolishness*; or that of the holy Psalmist; — *If I forget thee o Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, then let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; the sweet singer of Israel witheth his curious right hand useles, and his graceful Tongue disabled from chanting any more Hallelujahs to his Harp*, if (instead of forgetting) He doth not prefer *Jerusalem's* distress above his own chiefest Delight and Joy. Then beware lest thou forget the LORD: That is, be sure that thou remem-
ber

her to love and honour him in the day of thy Prosperity for then thou hast all the reason in the world, and the; strongest obligations imaginable, to praise and glorifie his holy Name, and that not in Word and Tongue only, saying GOD be thanked, the LORD be praised; (though that sounds well) but indeed and in Truth also, as that dying Roman said to his Friend, *Quæ volueris meminisse, quæ mandaverit exequi.* — To remember his Will and Pleasure, and do all his Commands. For to be truly thankful to GOD is certainly to love him: and if ye love me, keep my Commandments, saith the LORD.

And yet after all, that *Jeshurun* waxing fat in her fresh Pasture, grew sturdy and restiff, and Kickt against her Feeder, and most shamefully forgot the Lord her Redemer, appears by the Writings of the Prophets, as a Cloud of Witnesses, as also by those stupendious Showers of Judgments which fell upon them, according to the Predictions of those Prophets; and lastly by their utter Extirpation, and Destruction, their being Blotted out of the List of Nations for Crucifying the Lord of Life, and Killing their only Lord and Saviour. For to this day they are under a Curse; they are Vagabonds over all the Earth, they are no People, they have no Laws or Government, no King in *Israel*, neither God nor Man.

Which things happened unto them for Ensamples (says St. Paul) and are written, that is, left upon Record Chiefly, for our Admonition upon whom the Ends of the World are come.

And therefore lest we should tread in their Ungacious Steps, and forget the Lord when we are full fed with his Manifold Mercies; lest we should tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and be Destroyed of the Destroyer; lest our Iniquity also should be our Ruine; proceed,

2ly.

27y. To back and Inforce this seasonable *Cautiō* with some proper *Arguments* or *Considerations*, that it may make the deeper Impression upon all our Spirits. And,

1. Consider we that by forgetting GOD and growing careless of his Laws in the midst of our temporal Felicities, we provoke the best *Friend* we have to become our professed Enemy. For they draw not GOD'S Attributes to the *Life* and *Truth*, who allow him only *Mercy* for a Penitent, and no *Justice* at all for a Presumptuous Sinner. They are more False Prophets then *Balaam* himself, who would stretch the Words of his *Parable* to signifie, that GOD doth not behold, but Connive at all manner of *Iniquity* in the beloved *Jacob*, because he saw none there at that time, that cried loud enough for Speedy and Publick *Vengeance*, which is the undoubted meaning of that Place. No; GOD is not so fond of any of his Servants, as to be in love with their Follies: The dearest Child he hath must tast of the *Rod* if he deserve it. *David* was indeed a Man after GOD'S own heart in other things, but yet his *Murder* and *Adultery* were Damnable Sins for all that, as he had found by woful Experience, if he had not carefully washed them away with his own Penitent *Tears*, more Richly Influenced with his Redeemers *Blood*. *St. Peter* was a Man of Undaunted Courage, and most forward Faith at other times, but yet there is no excuse to be made for his denying his Lord and Master, and that with an Oath, saying, I know not the Man. *Israel* was once GOD'S Elect peculiar People of all others, Engraven upon the Palms of his Hands, and kept as the Apple of his Eye, (so tender he was of them) but all this while their Sins were written with a Pen of Iron, and the point of a Diamond, saith the Prophet, to shew that the Memory of

them was lasting, and they so far from being winked at, that they were more surely and speedily punished, then if they had been *Aliens*. Witness the many *Woes* and *Threats*, *Judgments* and *Curses* discharged upon them at divers times; such as *Pestilence* and *Famine*, *Blasting* and *Mildew*, the *Sword*, the *Fiery Serpents*, the *Heavens* sometimes as *Iron*, the *Earth* as *Brass*. *Because my People hath forgotten me, I will scatter them as with an East-Wind before the Enemy; I will shew them the Back, and not the Face in the day of their Calamity*, Jerem. 18. And again, *I will be unto them as a Lyon, or a Leopard, as a Bear bereaved of her Whelps: I will Rent the Cawl of their hearts, and Devour them like a Lyon, saith the LORD*, Hos. 13. All this to that *Beloved People*. So that however *Vain Men* may fancy, that their being of the Number of *GODS Elect*, and in a State of *Grace*, is a sufficient Patent or Priviledge to excuse their Sins, yet the Case is clear that they *deceive* themselves herein, although they be (if 'twere possible) of the *very Elect*. For be he Jew or Christian, be he Saint or Angel, that *Forgets* his *GOD*, he thereby *Forfeits* his Favour and Friendship, and *Incurrs* his utmost Enmity and Wrath; he loleth the *Light of his Countenance*, and makes the *Sm of Righteousness* appear to him in no other, then that *Terrible shape of a Consuming Fire*.

This Argument alone, methinks, should be strong enough to drive the Nail home; beware lest thou forget the *L O R D*, for thereby thou wilt make him thine *Enemy*; and a Potent *Enemy* he is, worthy of all thy fear: For he can Torment thee with a thousand Plagues here, and then Cast both Body and Soul into the *Ne-thermost Hell* hereafter.

2. Consider that to forget *G O D* when we are *Daily Loaden* with his *Blessings*, would argue us extremely

treemly disingenuous, and basely *Ingrateful*, the most detestable Name of all others ; call me that, and call me worse if you can. A Name that Nature it self abhors : For, not to mention the Stork (that Famous Symbol of Piety,) very Lyons and Wolves, Tygers, and Bears are Civil and Grateful to their own Parents and Relatives. Only the Noble and Rational Creature that calls himself *Man*, in this exceeds the very *Beasts that Perish* : That he is sometimes Ingrateful to his own *Kind*, oftner to his *King*, but most of all to his most Gracious G O D. Inasmuch that the Almighty doth, as it were, Challenge the whole *Creation* to Match or Vie with his Unworthyness, *Isa. 1. Hear O, Heavens, and give ear O Earth ! for the LORD hath spoken ; I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have Rebelled against me.* The Complaint is of *Israel* still, the *peculiar People*, and may it be peculiar to them alone ; but let it not be told in Gath, nor published in the Streets of Askelon, that we should ever deserve that unnatural Brand and most odious Name of *Ingrateful Christians*.

3. Consider the *Uncertainty* of our present happiness and *Halcyon Days* of Peace and Plenty. For G O D lets no Leases for *Lives* in dispensing his Temporal Blessings : We are all but *Tenants at will*, and may be turn'd out of all, and Beggar'd at his Pleasure. There is, ye know, a natural Vicissitude of things : The whole World is ever turning Round, Day and Night, Summer and Winter have their mutual Courses. The most Glorious Day is shut up with a pitchy Night, a dull, uncouth Winter usually follows the most Sprightly Summer ; nay, the Sun is oft sequester'd of his Noon-day Glory by a little Cloud appearing first like a *Mans hand*, but afterwards shewing it self to be more like the *Hand* of him who sometimes makes *Darkness* his

this Pavilion, though he ever dwells in in *accessible Light*. A very lively Emblem of the Instability of all humane affairs, which admit of as much *change* of Weather, as Nature it self. For there is seldom one Sun-shine day of *Peace*, but a *Cloud* rises in the midst on't, from whence the Thunder and Lightning of *Fatal Wars* breaks out of a sudden; however Night is drawing on, and will at length overtake us, and then all our Joys and Comforts will suffer a more continued Interruption, perhaps be totally Eclipsed by Trouble and Misery. *Nulla fors longa & dolor est voluptas invicem cedunt, brevior voluptas*, says the excellent Tragedian; no condition of Life here, not the best is fixed and immutable: Sorrow and Joy take their turns, (there going commonly a whole day of Trouble to one hour of Joy) and the *Stars in their Courses* fight either for, or against us according as we demean our selves.

Beloved, our Memories are treacherous indeed, if we have quite forgotten the severe Discipline G O D hath of late Years exercised upon this *City*, and this Sinful *Nation*, Chiefly by the devouring *Sword*, the Raging *Pestilence*, and the Consuming *Fire*; for all which we ought to lay our hands upon our Mouths, and acknowledg them as just *Judgments* upon us for our forgetting G O D in the midst of our Jollity. Those *Storms* (through Mercy) are at present over, and we in a very great *Calm*; we enjoy more Temporal Felicities (if we would see it) *then even heart could wish*, as the Psalmist speaks; though we hear of nothing but *Wars*, and *Rumours of Wars* abroad, yet we are not troubled at home, (bating our own groundless Jealousies, and Superstitious Fears) farther then to sit down quietly under our own *Vines and Fig-trees*, and Reap the Fruit of GODS Blessing upon our own Labours. GOD hath marvelously turned our great Captivity long ago,

as the Rivers in the South ; He hath ever since given us *Beauty for Asbes, The Oyl of Joy for Sorrow, and the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness.* All the danger is, lest we also grow sick of *Israels Disease* : Lest we become *prond and presumptuous, wax wanton, and careless of paying him due Returns, and so make our own Tables a Snare, our very Blessings a Curse.* GOD doth not intend to *kill* us with his *Kindnesses* ; but, if we know not when we are well, if we can't wield and manage a full and *prosperous Estate* ; if nothing but a *Furnace* will melt us into *Tears*, and purge away our *Dross and Follies*, (*wretched Dust as we are !*) into the *Furnace* we must go again even until *seven times* : The *Scene* will certainly alter in a *Moment*, the *Wheel of things* turn quite round, and the *end of our sorrows, be far worse then the beginning.* Then let not the *Pride of thine Heart* deceive thee, O Man, and say not thou, who shall disturb me when I am at *rest in my Possessions, or Transgressions* ; for *though thou exalt thy self as an Eagle, and set thy Nest among the Stars, yet thence will I bring thee down* saith the LORD Obad. v. 4.

4. Consider the many solemn *Vows and Promises* we offered up to GOD in our distress, to make our *Prayers* for deliverance effectual and successful ; for they will all be required at our hands, as so many further *Obligations* we freely laid upon ourselves, not to forget the LORD in the day of our *Rejoycing*.

It is the *Natural effect of Adversity* to make Men consider, and grow *Wiser* : To come to themselves, to their right *Wits*, like the *Prodigal* reduced to his last *husk*. No *Lectures of Morality* make such *Impression*, as those that are back'd with the *Rod of Affliction* ; no *Law* compels and forces its own *Execution*, like that of *Necessity*, which makes us say proverbially, *that hath no*

Law

Law against it. I remember *Lactantius* observes well that the very *Pagans* themselves when Scourged with depopulating *Wars*, Contagious Diseases, unusual droughts, great Rains, Inundations, Storms, Hurricanes, or any other grievous publick Calamity, fall down on their knees presently to the G O D of Heaven, and invoke him earnestly and unanimously, with *Prayers* and *Tears* to divert and remove his *Judgment* from them. To which he adds, if any of them be reduced to extream Poverty, and forced to beg his *Bread* from Door to Door, he makes use of the Name of G O D, as the most powerful Argument of his *Petition*, beseeching Men for G O D S sake to have pity and Compassion on *Him*. But then (as he goes on) *postquam metus deseruit* &c. So soon as ever they are well rid of that danger, Fear, or Misery, they return in whole Shoals to the *CONVENTICLES* of their *Idol Gods*, and Sacrifice all the time of their Prosperity to them; *Last. Lib. 2. Divin. Instit.*

These were professed *Heathens*, but what shall we say, if some pretended *Christians* are not ashamed to Act the same part, or something very like it.

I might bring in the *Merchant* in a *Storm*, who will offer freely even to *half*, nay *all* his Estate to Charitable uses (rather than fail) provided he may have his *Life* for a prey: *Skin for Skin* will he venture for that; but when that danger is once over and he got safe a Shore, he forfeits his *Vow*, and cheats his GOD, by making some three-penny Largees or pitiful *Alms* to serve the turn.

Or I might tell you at large of the *Woman* in *Tra-
vail*, who goes for a pure *Saint*, a *Seraphick* *Virress*, whilst the pangs of *Death* are upon her, but soon after her more formal than hearty *Acknowledgments*, she utterly forgets that great, though common *Deliverance*.

But I shall only instance in the Man thrown into a *Malignant Feaver* by his own intemperance; when the Disease grows upon him, and begins to prey upon his *Vitals*, insomuch that his ablest Physicians *halt between two opinions*, whether he will Live, or Die, and himself finds small hopes of Recovery from within; Oh! what Sighs and Groans are fetcht from the very bottom of his *Heart*! what earnest Prayers, what loud indefatigable Expostulations proceed out of his *Mouth*! what an importunate Suit doth he present before the *Throne of Grace*, that he may be spared a little, little while, and have space to Repent before he go hence, and be no more seen! what Golden Promises doth he freely pass, what warm Protestations doth he make of his speedy *Conversion*! Oh that I could but escape this one approaching Fiery *Fit*! I would most certainly become a *New Man*; I would Correct the dangerous Errors of my *Ways*, Contemn the little Lusts and Vanities of the World, and serve my G O D with all my *Heart*, with all my *Soul*, and all my *Strength*. Sweet J E S U S grant me but this one Request, try me once more; and if I be not henceforth a *Reformed Man*, I ask no more Mercy; then let me *die the Death*!

Truly the Man speaks well, and who would not believe that he is in *Earnest*? considering they are (for ought he knows) the *last words* he is to say. Well! the Almighty hears, and is overcome by his importunity: He restores his *Health* and *Strength* beyond all humane expectation, and renews the *Lease of his Life* for many, very many Years.—Now is it possible for this Man to be worse then his word? I am afraid—No; I am ashamed to tell you, but rather refer it to your own daily and sad *Experience*. Yet thus much I must needs say, that if after all this, he Relapse into his former wicked Life, he is *Unjust*, as well as *Ingrateful*

to his GOD, and the last Estate of that Man must needs be far worse than the first. Which that it may never be Verified of any of us, I beseech you let us call to mind the time past, and seriously reflect upon the Sacred Resolutions we took, and Solemn Promises we made to GOD in our extreme distress, and be careful with DAVID to pay all our Vows unto the most High.

Lastly, Consider we the true Reasons that moved GOD to turn our Captivity, pluck down Enemies and Oppressors, and Redeem us from a more than Egyptian Bondage; to renew our former Peace and Happiness, Restore our lost Religion, and Ancient Government, and give us Princes as at the first, and Judges as at the Beginning. For that Success must needs infer a good Cause, is a Turkish fallacy, which yet of late, hath much imposed upon the Christian World. Indeed it is an old mistake, a Branch of Natural Pride in Men, to attribute Victory and Deliverance to their own Sword, their own Merit, Prowess, and Gallantry, whereas they belong to a far different Cause. But Moses hath long since determined against them in the Case of Israel: Deut. 9. 4. 5. Speak not thou in thy heart, after that the Lord thy GOD hath cast thine Enemies out before thee, saying, for my Righteousness hath the LORD brought me in to possess this Land, but for the Wickedness of these Nations the Lord doth drive them out; Not for thy Righteousness, or for the Uprightness of thine heart, (as he goes on) for thou art a stiff-necked and gain-saying People. Thus we ought not to impute our many and great Blessings, and particularly the late Wonderful Deliverance of Our Gracious KING, His only Royal Brother, and all His Most Loyal Subjects, out of the Hands of those Blood-thirsty Men, to our own Righteousness, but to their Malignant Wickedness; to GODS mere Mercy to us, and Exemplary

Exemplary Justice upon them, for their studied Murders, Solemn Perjuries, Notorious Sacriledg, formed Conspiracies, unwearied fowlest Treasons, and (which is the Spring of all their Motions) their damnable Hypocrisy in making a mock of all Religion.

So many and such weighty reasons we have to remember HIM in the day of Peace and Triumph (who remembered us when we were in trouble: and saved us so lately when we were upon the very brink of Ruin) and then especially to beware lest we forget the LORD.

To close up this Second general, 'tis a thousand pities that fair weather should do any harm; that when the Sun is most prodigal of his wealthy beams, and spends his richest influence to maintain Natures Glory, he should most tan her Beauty, and scorch her Hair; yet that it is so sometimes every drought can witness, but it is not to be attributed to any blemish in the Sun, that bright Eye of the World, whose Rays are ever the same, apt to cherish and preserve Life, but rather to the indisposition of the matter before him, and thus it is no fault in the Sun of Righteousness, that his healing beams do ruin and destroy us; that's the great imperfection of Men, who make their own Happiness their Misery, and turn their very Mercies into Sins, such Fools and Brutes they are, that they will be sooner affrighted into a sense of Religion by the Sword of GODS Judgments, and the dark Rod of his Fury, then wooed and courted to his service by those winning Arguments, his Golden Scepter of Love, and Staff of Comfort. Wherefore that we fall not asleep in security when the World smiles upon us, and all our endeavours are crowned with success, I come

To the Third and Last place, to tender you some Directions, how we should manage a full and prosperous Estate, how we may best reduce this instruction to practice. And

1. When thou thy self art happy, don't trample upon, or insult over them that are in misery, but pity them in some degree at least, and if they suffer unjustly, do thy utmost to relieve; and help them out; the Disciples thought they asked our LORD a very subtile Question: Did this man sin, or his Parents, that he was born blind? but he tells them, neither, as they meant; he was not born Blind because he or his Parents were greater sinners than other men; but for this reason, that they (and others) if they were not blind, might see the glory of GOD in our Saviours working his cure, in the opening of his Eyes, and men are general-ly apt to make false constructions of GODS private judgments in this Life: where they see them fall heavy they presently cry, there dwells a more then ordinary sin, as if there were no after-reckoning, no Judgment to come; from whence they think themselves obliged to help GOD to torment him, and fancy they do Him service, when they hate, scorn, kick, or buffet him, and heap more coals of fire upon his wretched Head; such fools are they, and ignorant of the mysterious Fracts, and hidden methods of the Divine Providence, whose ways are all unsearchable, and whose Paths past our finding out. How were his Wise and Rational Friends mistaken in the case of poor Job? They concluded from his many and great sufferings, that he was the most wicked wretch, and notorious Hypocrite under the cope of Heaven, when by GODS own Testimony, he was the most perfect, upright man in all the Earth, and it stands upon everlasting record, that in all this (whether temptation

or trouble brought upon him by Men or Devils) *in all this Job sinned not, nor charged GOD foolishly; wherefore let no Man judg before the time, considering there is another World, that will set all things right and straight, which, his Folly thinks go somewhat oddly and awry in this, as we would that men should do unto us, so let us do unto them, in their straits, and pressures, their difficulties, and distresses, for if thou shouldst despise or oppress thy poor Brother, when thou art rich, and full, it may be thou wouldst oppress a J O B, a man of most admirable vertues, and highest Integrity; and thy weights and ballances are both false, if thou measurest his sins by his sufferings. Suppose he be a very Judas, and known convicted Traytor; yet what is that to thee? Who made thee a Judge? It is enough that the Law takes publick Justice of him; all this while the Gospel requires thee not to exclude him out of thy private Charity; besides (ye know) it is very foul play to strike a man when he is down, and basest Cowardise to trample upon either a Living Dog, or a Dead Lyon. That's the First.*

2. When thou prosperest in the World, and livest according to thy Hearts desire, then be sure to let Adversity be the frequent object of thy retired thoughts and meditations. All things indeed go well with thee to day, *but boast not thy self (says Solomon) of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a Day may bring forth, Quamobrem omnes cum res secundæ sunt maxime, tum maxime meditari secum oportet, quo patitur adversam ærumnam ferant, pericla, damna, exilia, &c.* saith the comedian; willing us not to be secure in our prosperity, but then learn to expect and bear any evil tidings, or adverse fortune. Holy Job (now in his Wealth and Grandeur) took an excellent course for this, and well worthy all our imitation, when his

Children had been long Feasting together by turns from house to house, the good old Man went and Offered burnt Offerings according to the Number of them all; For it may be said he) my Sons have Sinned, and Cursed GOD in their Hearts. Though he knew of nothing but a Lawful Recreation, yet, it may be, for fear of the worst, he went to his Devotions, and offered Sacrifice; as knowing there would be no hurt in that however, but that it might prevent some unseen Mischief. And indeed common Prudence may instruct us all to look for Mischances, and expect Troubles before they come, that when they do come, we may be upon our Guard to receive them. After Wit is for none but Fools to brag of; a Wise Man takes his Measures by looking before him, as well before, as behind him, and is able in time to take out the Sting of an Evil before it can reach him. Then, think of Losses, when you thrive the most, of Wars in Peace, of Want in Plenty, of Grief in Joy, of Sickness in Health, and of Death it self in the midst of Life, and then no Change of things can surprize or harm you, but (as St. Paul observes) all things shall work together for good to them that love GOD.

3. Use thine abundance with all Moderation, abuse it not to gratifie thy craving Lusts, and Insatiable Affections. for they are absurd and unreasonable men, who think they do not truly rejoyce in GOD'S Blessings, unless they may Sacrifice them by whole-sale to their greedy Appetites; who madly fancy they cannot be happy, if their desires be held to any Stint or Bounds. hence comes all their excess in Eating and Drinking, and other Lawful Pleasures: They think to take their fill of Enjoyment, and glut themselves with the Marrow and Quintessence of all Good things; and so mistake the Quantity for the Quality; whereas

in truth, all Earthly Pleasure Commends it self in nothing more, than as it is more seldom used. Therefore, if G O D hath given thee Increase of Corn and Wine, use them with all Caution, and Sobriety. Eat not too greedily of the Corn: For a full Belly is most unfit for Devotion and Contemplation; besides that it breeds all Humours, and endangers Health. And drink not too freely of the Wine; for though it be good and Generous, and move it self aright, yet too much thereof will Intoxicate; it will drown thy Reason and Parts, enervate all thy Faculties, and Powers, and make thee forget, or deny the Lord thy G O D, or take his Holy Name in Vain. And for all other lawful Diversions take that one Counsel of the Wise, experienced King Prov. 25. *Have thou found Honey? Eat so much thereof as is sufficient for thee (and no more), lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it up again.* There's no other way but that, to prevent a Surfeit, whether in Body or Mind. But you'll say perhaps, what must I then do with mine Abundance? For after this rate of Dieting my self, I shall never live to spend it. Why, yes; there is another, a more excellent way to be rid of the overplus to better advantage; and that shall be my

4. Direction. Be Hospitable, Charitable, and free to Communicate what thou canst well spare, to Relieve the Wants and Supply the Necessities of others. For G O D hath made thee Rich on purpose to be their Steward and Almoner, and (as little as some Men heed it) will one day expect a good Account of that Stewardship. It is the Misers great mistake to think at his Choice and Liberty, and purely in his own Power, whether he will expend his Superfluities in good works, or no; for the Law of Justice requires it of him; although, from the manner, end, and some other circumstances, we commonly call it Charity. That Fool in the Gos-

pel needed not to have put himself to so much trouble and Charge in building his Barns bigger, to lodge his plentiful Crop; there was Barn-room enough in the World, if he would have seen it; for, as *St. Austine* observes, *the Bellies of the Poor are GODS Granary.*

If therefore thou hast any Bread to spare, cast it up-
on the Waters (as *Solomon* adviseth that is, venture
it among the Multitude, rather than fail) though ne-
ver so troublesome and unworthy, and thou shalt find
it again after many days; for however Men may be in-
grateful, yet GOD is not unrighteous to forget any
work or labour of Love. *St. Paul* bids us Charge them
that are Rich in this World, that they be Rich in good
Works, ready to distribute, willing to Communicate. And
again, that, as they have Ability, and Opportunity,
they do good unto all Men, especially to them who are
of the Household of Faith; he means chiefly those, that
Minister at the Altar, and daily watch over your Souls.
For this is pure Religion, and undefiled before GOD,
whereby a Man shall not only preserve himself Inno-
cent and impregnable to all the Temptations of a full
and prosperous Estate, but also make himself Friends of
the Mammon of unrighteousness, who when he faileth
here, may receive him into those everlasting Habitati-
ons of GOD and his Son JESUS CHRIST,
and all his Holy Saints and Elect Angels.

5ly. and lastly, For yet thou lackest one thing, with-
out which all other directions will prove Vain and
Useless; and that is this: Resolve, with Penitent *Da-
vid*, to give thy self unto Prayer; To implore the
Grace and Assistance of GODS Holy Spirit day by day,
whose proper Work and Office it is to Sanctifie all
Conditions of Life to us: As well to keep us down
when we begin to be Elevated into Pride, as to buoy
our Spirits up, and be our Comforter in extream Di-
stresses.

Prayer is that powerful Engine whereby the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence, and the Violent take it by Force : whereby Mortal Men wrestle with the Immortal G O D, and will not let him go till he hath blessed them. That Sedulous Importunity which once extorted Justice from an Unjust Judge, must needs be ever prevalent for Mercy with the Righteous Judge of all the Earth.

I had almost said that (under G O D) the KING owes his late never-to-be-forgotten *Preservation*, in a great Measure, to the *Prayers* of the Church offered up daily on his behalf; that G O D would save him from all his undeserved *Enemies*, whose tender *Mercies* are *Cruel*, and their very *Prayers* and *Preachments* are of *Cursing and Lies*, as the Psalmist speaks.

I'm sure his Martyr'd Father, of ever Blessed Memory (whose Innocent blood perhaps G O D is making especial *Inquisition* for at this time) hath left us an useful *Note* to this purpose, amongst other his Sacred Reliques, which I shall crave leave to Read you in his own *Royal Words*.

One of the Greatest Faults some Men found with the Common-Prayer-Book, I believe, (saith that Great, Good and Just Man) was this : That it taught them to *Pray* so oft for me ; to which Petitions they had not Loyalty enough to say A M E N , nor yet Charity enough to forbear Reproaches, and even *Cursings* of me, in their own Forms, instead of *Praying* for me. EIM. B&C. ch. 16.

The Text is so very plain that it needs no comment, (were I worthy to make it) and therefore so I shall leave it. Mean while (to return to my own Argument, from this Digression, I could not fairly avoid) Who will O Man, who upon any score, canst trust to thine own strength? It will betray, and fail thee; it is no better then a broken Reed, for though the Spirit may be sometimes willing: though thy Judgment be convinced, and thy Will also made a Proselyte to resolve upon this, or that good work, yet it is often left undone, in regard the Flesh is always weak.

—Video meliora probòque.

Deteriora sequor — is the natural Mans true Motto; it is all he can justly pretend to, to commend Virtue in the notion, but condemn it still in his own Practice; and I must observe it to you for a great Trick (however some may seem to Preach quite the contrary Doctrine, or at least, not to press this so often, nor so earnestly as they should) That, Mens trusting to their own natural Powers, and not regarding, nor depending GODS special Grace and help, (as if they meant to bid despite to his Holy Spirit) is one main, if not the only reason of their persisting in their old impieties, and particularly, of their abusing and forfeiting their temporal blessings, and hazarding their hopes also of Eternal Life. For thus saith the Lord GOD, Jer. 17. 5. Cursed be the Man that putteth his trust in Man, or maketh Flesh his Arm! Be it the Man himself, or any other mere Man, all's a case; he is still accursed.

Wherefore let no Man living boast of his infirmities, nor Glory in his shame; let us not presume upon our own Strength (or Weakness rather) nor magnifie the powers of Nature in derogation to the Grace of GOD, by which alone we must be saved; but rather let us with Holy David (as in utmost duty bound) Make
the

*the LORD our only confidence, the most High GOD
the Rock of our Salvation.*

And forasmuch as the Eternal Son of GOD our Saviour hath solemnly, and freely promised us, *that whatsoever we shall ask the Father in HIS NAME, He will give it us*: and particularly this inestimable and necessary Gift of his Holy SPIRIT, recorded for our great and endless comfort, St. Luke 11. 13. and St. John 15. 16. (which by the way, is the true reason that all our Publick Prayers run in that Name and Style, and are shut up, and bidden GOD speed for the sake and merits of JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.)

Let us humbly, heartily, and incessantly mention the Holy Name of JESUS before the Throne of the Eternal TRINITY; that GOD would vouchsafe his Holy SPIRIT to dwell in all our Hearts, to help our Infirmities, and lead us into all Truth, to subdue our natural Pride, and sanctifie all our Mercies Spiritual and Temporal; that we may use this World, and not abuse it, and ever be careful, lest in the midst of the many and great Blessings we now enjoy, we should forget the LORD, the Author of them all; that so he may not be provoked to forget, but may in much mercy remember us, in that day when he maketh up his Jewels, and may bind up our Souls in the bundle of Life; which GOD grant for the same JESUS sake, our only Redeemer, to whom with the FATHER and the Holy GHOST, Three Persons, and One GOD, be all the Power and Glory, Praise and Thanksgiving, now and for ever more, A MEN.

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